

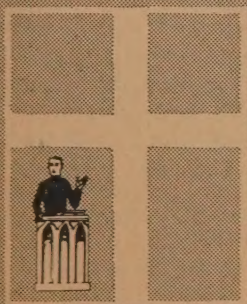
# GUIDE

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## Problems and Ways to Unity

Augustin Cardinal Bea

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IT SEEMS TO ME

## Toward True Unity

Father Thomas Stransky, C.S.P., one of the co-ordinating assistants in the office of the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, held a significant press conference on his recent visit to the United States.

He reported that Protestant and Orthodox church groups eagerly responded to the invitation of Pope John to inform him of their wishes and suggestions regarding matters to be clarified at the coming general council.

He told reporters that the Holy See is grateful for these suggestions that may help the council to pave the way for true unity. Questions concerning religious tolerance, the relations between church and state and the role of the layman in the Church are matters frequently raised in these letters.

Summarizing the significance of this willingness of Rome to listen and the eagerness of others to voice their suggestions, Father Stransky remarked:

"The age of the counter-Reformation is over. The main lines of argument in the counter-Reformation always centered on points of difference between Catholics and Protestants. Now we have entered a period of common reflection on the nature of Christianity itself. We have come gradually to realize that the division of Christianity is a scandal and a contradiction of Christ's will 'that they all may be one.'"

Priests long devoted to winning converts must keep abreast of these new developments and bring them to the attention of their parishioners. These new and profound shifts in the religious climate demand constant prayer and study. And we should be prepared to modify our outlook and our apostolic methods to meet these unexpected opportunities. Every parish, within the limits of its resources and competence, should increasingly become a kind of grass roots "Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity." Sympathetic listening, ability and eagerness to answer questions and constant prayer are needed at the local level. Otherwise the efforts of the Pope will be stalled or blocked.

JOHN T. MCGINN, C.S.P.

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# Problems and Ways to Unity

By Augustin Cardinal Bea

## *1. Our Attitude Toward Our Separated Brothers*

It is not easy to find a proper middle course in determining our attitude toward separated brothers. Looking around us we shall find that two almost diametrically opposed attitudes exist in this respect.

The first is adopted by those people who attach importance to the fact that separated Christians adhere either to a doctrine or doctrinal system which the Catholic Church has declared to be heretical, or else, to a schismatic church which refuses obedience to the Roman Pontiff as the visible Head of the entire Church of Christ.

Now heresy and schism are in themselves grave matters, and whoever professes them creates by teaching and by example dangers to the faith of other members of the Church. All of this leads followers of the first group to adopt an attitude of extreme reserve, of self-defense, of severity, of exclusion from the community.

There is another attitude which is, as we have said, almost diametrically opposed to the first. There are people who are inclined to condemn the first attitude in general, to consider it a vestige of the ill-famed "inquisition," or at least as something belonging to other times, responding, if at all, to the spirit of the Old Testament and not to that of the Gospel, to the charity of Christ.

Today the opinion is that one must be "open to all"; one must seek to understand and recognize that which is true and good in the position of others, considering above all their real intentions and realizing one's own

shortcomings. One must seek to learn from them to enrich one's own position with the riches which are found also in other confessions.

Thus one ends by placing the Catholic Church and other confessions almost on an equal level. People speak readily of real or presumed defects, of mistakes, of meanness, of narrow mindedness in our Church; one demands a spirit of conciliating charity capable of making concessions even at the price of sacrifices, as long as unity is promoted.

Sometimes people go to the extent of asking such "understanding" of separated brothers that they need only recognize dogmas considered to be "essential."

What can be said of these two attitudes? Their description makes the elements of the problem clear. But it is not difficult to perceive that both cases are extremist attitudes, each containing some truth and at the same time some falseness, or at least something exaggerated or incomplete. A thorough analysis of them is, therefore, necessary to distinguish the true and just elements from errors or exaggerations.

Regarding the first attitude, the distinction contained in the well-known phrase of St. Augustine seems important to us: *Odisse errores, diligere errantes* (hate errors, love those who err). Let us distinguish, therefore, heresy and schism as such, and the persons who profess them in one way or another.

First of all, let us consider heresy and schism as such. It is a fact that the Church, from the very first pages of the New Testa-



ment, shows great severity in matters of discipline, of obedience to its authority, of fidelity to doctrine.

It is true that this severity surprises the modern man (and probably even ourselves) and sometimes even annoys him almost as though it were an offense to the sense of humanity, of understanding and of broad-mindedness, it being peacefully and commonly accepted today by modern man that human relations must be governed above all, or even exclusively, by a "humane" spirit.

If, however, we take the word of God in the New Testament seriously, as well as the attitude of the Church during so many centuries, we must at least have the courage to consider with open eyes the fact of the severity we find in the Holy Books themselves.

For the sake of simplicity—leaving aside that which the holy fathers and the councils teach us—let us restrict ourselves to the New Testament, which is the norm of faith and of life for all those people who call themselves Christian.

#### NEW TESTAMENT SEVERITY

Now, it is well known, that the New Testament shows great severity in matters of discipline and of faithfulness to doctrine. St. Paul, to whom we owe the sublime hymn to charity, has in this concept very harsh words:

"What is your wish? Shall I come to you with a rod, or in love and in the spirit of meekness?" he wrote to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 4, 21).

Regarding the people of Crete, who, quoting one of their poets, he called "always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons," St. Paul commands Titus: "Rebuke them sharply that they may be sound in faith . . ." (Titus 1, 13). And it is a factual severity, to be shown by facts.

He wrote to the Corinthians: "I write to you not to associate with one who is called a brother, if he is immodest, or covetous, or an idolator, or evil-tongued, or a drunkard, or greedy; with such a one do not even take food" (1 Cor. 5, 11). The severity of the Apostle can assume terrible forms.

Regarding the incestuous Christian of Corinth (cf. 1 Cor. 5, 1), he establishes definitely: "In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ—you and our spirit gathered together with the power of our Lord Jesus—to de-

liver such a one over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of our Lord Jesus" (1 Cor. 5, 4 ff.). In whatever way one may interpret this transfer to the hands of Satan, there can be no doubt that it is a case of very grave punishment.

With regard to the attitude of St. Paul toward heresy, some of the words of the Apostle might sound almost like resignation: ". . . there must be factions so that those who are approved may be made manifest among you" (1 Cor. 11, 19).

But though admitting the necessity of heresies and schisms, Paul censures them with very strong words in his famous discourse of farewell to Miletus:

"I know that after my departure fierce wolves will get in among you, and will not spare the flock. And from among your own selves men will rise spreading perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. Watch, therefore . . ." (Acts 20, 29).

And as he expressed himself against the incestuous man of Corinth, so also did he proceed in matters of faith and doctrine. In fact he wrote to Timothy that he should always have faith and good conscience, and continued:

"Some rejecting this have made shipwreck of the faith, among whom are Hymeneus and Alexander, whom I have delivered up to Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme" (1 Tim. 1, 19 ff.).

But this attitude of St. Paul is but the echo of the attitude of Jesus:

"Woe to the world because of scandals! For it must needs be that scandals come, but woe to the man through whom scandal does come!" (Matt. 18, 7). "It were better for him if a milestone were hung about his neck and he were thrown into the sea, than that he should cause one of these little ones to sin." (Luke 17, 2). And in particular, regarding submission to the Church, the Lord says: "If he refuse to hear even the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and the publican" (Matt. 18, 17), that is to say, that he be excluded from the community of the faithful.

These words of the Lord, like others, are of a severity which probably perturbs more than one among us. Let us endeavor therefore to discover the more profound reasons and the spirit of this severe attitude. It will then appear to us less surprising and perturbing.

It will seem strange, and yet it is true, that the reason for this severity is, ultimately, none other than love. Above all, a jealous love for the purity of doctrine.

The Apostles feel themselves closely linked and obligated to God and their Divine Master. What they preach is not their own invention, a result of their personal consideration, but a sacred legacy entrusted to them by Jesus.

#### AUTHORIZED WITNESSES

They are the authorized witnesses, "designated beforehand by God," (Acts 10, 41) conscious of their mission as witnesses and of the corresponding responsibility for the preservation and faithful transmission of that to which they are to testify (Luke 24, 48; Acts 1, 8; 2, 32; 3, 15; 5, 32; 10, 39; cf. I Cor. 15, 11).

And not only do they transmit faithfully, but they also control what they have transmitted, that it may be preserved without alterations (Acts 10, 15 etc.; I Thess. 2, 13; I Cor. 11, 23-25; 15, 1-11; Gal. 1, 11; Col. 2, 6). Regarding this faithfulness that which Jesus said of the law of the Old Testament is true:

"Not one jot nor one tittle shall be lost from the Law . . . whoever does away with one of these least commandments, and so teaches men, shall be called least in the Kingdom of Heaven" (Matthew 5, 18). This word of the master is echoed by the word of St. Peter: ". . . you must understand first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is made by private interpretation. For not by will of man was prophecy brought at any time; but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (II Peter 1, 20).

To this very grave obligation imposed on the Apostles and heads of the Church to be faithful in the preservation and transmission of doctrine—an obligation which has as its fruit the unity of faith—there corresponds on the part of their subjects, the faithful, the obligation of following the masters, accepting their doctrine and submitting themselves to the orders they promulgate.

In the love for the purity of doctrine are included for the masters a jealous love of the unity in the faith of the souls entrusted to them, and the responsibility of protecting them against all dangers of contagion from error; faith and unity in it being the road to the salvation of their souls.

In that severity is also contained love for the very ones who err and care for their eternal salvation. To his severe letter to the Corinthians, St. Paul adds this note: ". . . I write these things, while absent, that when present I may not act more severely, according to the power that the Lord has given me for upbuilding and not for destruction." (2 Cor. 13, 10).

And to the Thessalonians he explained the reasons why one should avoid association with those people who give scandal: "And if anyone does not obey our word by this letter, note that man and do not associate with him, that he may be put to shame. . . ." (2 Thess. 3, 14). Even the harsh "delivery" to Satan takes place, as we saw previously, "that his spirit may be saved in the day of Our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Cor. 5, 5).

From what has been said we see above all that spirit of jealous love; love of truth, love of unity, love of faithful souls and love also of erring souls. The love of the faithful and also of those people who err is not beyond understanding.

One cannot, however, say as much concerning the jealous love of truth and of the purity of doctrine. Living in a world bubbling over with ideas, with different and contradictory philosophical and religious ideas, one is probably too inclined toward a certain connivance, toward a certain indifference, toward being ashamed of the intransigence of Catholic dogma, as though it were something narrow-minded, not very modern, not very open to reality, almost fanatic. Moreover, an ill-understood love of unity and of separated brothers sometimes pushes one toward a false contentment.

#### MISTAKEN ZEAL

It is obvious in this light to what extent these ideas are alien to the letter and to the spirit of the New Testament and inspired, therefore, by an ill-enlightened zeal and charity. It is, therefore, more than right that the authority of the Church be vigilant concerning the purity of doctrine and protect the faithful from every dangerous influence.

This is also the reason why it gave precise norms regarding inter-confessional conventions and dwells on doctrinal questions, insisting that the faithful should take care not to offend revealed doctrine and the norms of the Church even in discussions and collaboration between Catholics and non-Cath-



olics involving questions not of a direct religious nature, such as social matters or matters of aid (cf. Holy Office Instruction *De Motione oecumenica*, Dec. 20, 1949, A.A.S., 42 (1950), 145).

Throughout the entire work for union one must take, therefore, diligent care of the soundness of one's own faith and of the integrity of Catholic dogma, aspiring always to the sublime goal proposed to us by the Apostle that all may attain—"to the unity of the faith and of the deep knowledge of the Son of God, to perfect manhood, to the mature measure of the fullness of Christ.

"And this He has done that we may be now no longer children, tossed to and fro and carried about by every wind of doctrine devised in the wickedness of men, in craftiness, according to the wiles of error." (Ephes. 4, 13-15).

Having clarified the first element, "odisse errores," the second, "diligere errantes," remains to be explained. Charity, as one has seen, is at the basis of the severity of the New Testament in the face of heresy and schism.

The two attitudes, which we outlined above, are not, therefore, as may have seemed at first sight, diametrically opposed to one another. They are two different expressions of a single charity, which at times can apply severity, and at others gentleness; yet they both have charity as their root and they spring from it.

#### THE POPE'S CHARITY

Not only has the Holy Father repeatedly recommended this definition of charity, but he gave us also the most shining example of it. Immediately after his election, in his broadcast message of October 29, 1958, the Pontiff manifested his great hope for the union of all Christians.

"With fervent fatherly love We embrace the Universal Church, the Eastern and the Western alike. And we open heart and arms to all who are separated from this Apostolic See, where Peter himself lives in his successors, even to the consummation of the world (Matt. 28, 20), fulfilling the command of Jesus Christ to bind and loose upon earth (cf. *ibid.* 16, 19) and to feed the Lord's entire flock (cf. John, 21, 15-17). . . . We pray therefore, that all may come willingly and gladly. . . . No strange house will they find, but their own" (A.A.S. 50 (1958) 839 ff.; in *Civiltà Cattolica* 1958, IV, 433).

In his first encyclical "*Ad Petri Cathedram*," addressing the separated brothers, he wrote:

"Indulge this gentle longing We have to address you as brothers and sons . . . All those, therefore, who are separated from us, We address as brothers, using the words of St. Augustine: 'whether they like it or not, they are our brethren. They will cease to be our brethren only if they cease to say the Our Father'" (A.A.S. 51 (1959) 515 ff.; in *Civiltà Cattolica*, 1959, III, 127).

We note that, according to the word of the Holy Father, the Catholic Church is not for baptized non-Catholics "a strange house, but their own," and that he calls them brothers and sons.

Leaving aside for the moment the dogmatic definition of the sense of these words—this will be mentioned later—we stress this fact: this is the question of charity between brothers, of the charity of the Pope as the common father of all the faithful and consequently of the maternal love of the Church toward non-Catholic Christians.

On what other considerations is this attitude of charity based more clearly?

We note above all that the severe texts of the New Testament previously quoted refer to those people who personally and consciously detach themselves from the real faith and from obedience to the Church of Christ. Now this is certainly not the case of all those people who are separated from us today.

The great majority of these find themselves faced with a heritage transmitted to them by their ancestors, who were in many cases torn away from the Church by force or deceit.

Let us think of the proverb: *Cuius regio, eius religio* (every region has its religion). In the same way that it is no credit of ours to have been born and educated in a family belonging to the Catholic Church, neither it is their discredit that they are the sons of parents separated from our Church. Accepting in good faith their inheritance, these non-Catholics may believe sincerely that they are on the right road.

Neither must we forget that, despite all the differences of doctrine and worship, separated brothers still have a lot in common with us. In the Orientals (eastern Christians) we find a regular apostolic succession of their bishops, and with this, valid sacraments, particularly the Holy Eucharist.



The liturgy of the Mass is at the center of their religious life, it is considered "the real sacrifice of reconciliation for the living and for the dead" (C. Algermissen, *The Catholic Church and Other Christian Churches*, Rome, 1960, p. 529), and it is celebrated with great solemnity.

In their doctrine the Orientals preserve the ancient apostolic and patristic tradition and differ from the faith of the Latin Church only regarding a few points, especially in the denial of the dogmas defined by the councils, after their separation, such as the primacy and infallibility of the Roman Pontiff.

The veneration of the Most Blessed Mary is also dear to them, though they have not accepted the dogmatic definition of the Immaculate Conception and of the Assumption—dogmas which are found, however, in their liturgical books and generally accepted by their faithful.

#### INHERITED PATRIMONY

Regarding Protestants, the patrimony which they inherited from the Mother Church is unfortunately less rich than that of Eastern Christians. But they also have preserved precious elements of the Catholic doctrine and worship, which vary in degree in the different forms of Protestantism. One notices above all among many Protestants particularly among the simple faithful, a sincere piety, a great veneration of the Word of God contained in Holy Scripture and a serious effort to observe the commandments of God in their daily life.

One can certainly presume that the Lord grants to these men, who bear the name of Christ on their forehead, also the grace necessary for their Christian conduct.

That this divine grace is very powerful today is proved by the nostalgia for unity to be found not only in many individual faithful but also in whole groups. The private letters I have received from Protestants often testify to the efficacy of a strong grace which has made them know the good which the Catholic Church offers its faithful and gives rise to the great desire to become partakers of this good.

This explains the many individual conversions that we note in many countries, as for example, in England (on an average, 10,000 a year) and in the United States (more than 100,000). And among the converts there are people of very high intel-

lectual and cultural level, such as—to cite only a few—J. H. Newman, Thomas Merton, Sigrid Undset, G. K. Chesterton, Johannes Jorgensen, Gertrude von Le Fort, Edzard Schaper, Bruce Marshall, and Graham Greene.

Noticeable also in whole groups and communities is a "tendency toward a renewal of the ancient laws of worship" (cf. *Weltkirchenlexikon Handbuch der Okumene* (non-Catholic lexicon of All Christian Communities the World Over) by Franklin H. Little and H. Hermann Walz, Stuttgart, 1960, p. 18).

"The talks between the churches, which had been for so long only of a polemical nature, have become genuine conversations in which the different parties aspire together toward unity" (Ibid. p. 1039). A symptomatic manifestation of the desire for unity on the part of all Christians is also the "World Council of Churches." (Geneva), which assembles about 180 religious groups which—and this is the condition of admission—recognize "Jesus Christ as God and as our Saviour."

These facts prove definitely that we are face to face with a great change, not due to purely human and natural motives, but to influences of a supernatural order. In an important document, the Holy See itself said:

#### DESIRE FOR UNITY

"In many parts of the world, following different external events and changes of mentality, but thanks above all to the common prayers of the faithful, with the grace of the Holy Spirit, the desire that all those people who believe in Christ the Lord should return to unity was born and grew in the hearts of many people separated from the Church.

"This fact constitutes without doubt for the sons of the real Church a reason for holy joy in the Lord and together an invitation to help those people who sincerely seek truth, begging God, with insistent prayers, to give them the necessary light and strength." (Instruction *De motione oecumenica*, cit., loc. cit., 142).

Now if the Lord himself confers such grace on so many separated brothers who are in good faith, if the Church admonishes us to help them with our fervent prayers, should we not also embrace them with that true and supernatural charity of which



the Holy Father gave us such a magnificent example?

From this charity there will spring above all a real and ardent zeal for union and the fervent prayer for it, the understanding which is so very necessary, the conquest or resentment and false prejudices, a reciprocal, sincere esteem.

The only limit not to be overstepped in this charity will be the one outlined heretofore: the soundness of our own faith and the absolute integrity of Catholic dogma. But it is probably not correct to speak of a limit.

Let us say rather that the only caution on our part must be the following: that our

charity should remain in every way authentic, that is to say, absolutely faithful to the whole truth of Christ and of His spouse the Church, according to the saying of St. Paul: "For we can do nothing against the truth, but only for the truth" (2 Cor. 13, 8).

For from the moment the soundness of our faith and the integrity of dogma is impaired, our union with Christ and with His Church would also be impaired, and thereby also our capability of helping separated brothers, that is, the capability of working effectively for unity. Our motto is, therefore: "Truth in charity," according to the saying of St. Paul: "Veritatem facientes in caritate . . ." (practice the truth in love) (Eph. 4, 15).

## *2. Position of Our Separated Brothers in the Church*

In the preceding considerations we have justified the attitude of charity which we must have toward our separated brothers, but obviously we have not yet given the deeper explanation. Why do we call these Christians, separated from the Church, "brothers," "sons of the Church"? We are seeking to give a precise answer, although we realize that not everything in that question is fully clear. So we are establishing the points so that they may be understood with sufficient clarity.

As the beginning let us take the doctrine of the encyclical "Mediator Dei" of Pius XII. That unforgettable pontiff, speaking of the effect of Baptism, says that the baptized become by "common title members of the Mystical Body of Christ."

This teaching reinforces with few words that which St. Paul teaches us, according to whom Christ, while having many members, is a "single body," by reason of Baptism. The Apostle says in fact: "For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether slave or free" (I Cor. 12, 12).

With Baptism, he writes to the Galatians (3, 27) we have "put on Christ," we are all "one in Christ Jesus." The Code of Canon Law (Canon 87) outlines this teaching in juridical terms. "By Baptism a person becomes a subject of the Church of Christ with all the rights and duties unless insofar as rights are concerned, there is some obstacle impeding the use thereof."

One notes that the teaching of "Mediator Dei" and of St. Paul is universal. It speaks of the effect of Baptism as such, on an obvious condition that it be valid. It must therefore, apply in this way to our separated brothers also, even though they are separated from the Apostolic See as a result of heresy or schism, inherited from their ancestors.

It remains to be seen in what manner this takes place, that is, what happens following heresy or schism, to what holy Baptism does by itself. The encyclical "Mystici Corporis" of the same Pius XII answers explicitly, affirming that "schism, heresy or apostasy, by their very nature, separate one from the body of the Church."

It states precisely:

"In reality, one needs only count those, among the members of the Church, who have received the regenerating Baptism and, professing the true faith, neither separated themselves by misfortune from the company of this Body, nor were separated from it by legitimate authority for having committed serious faults. . . . Therefore, those who are divided for reasons of faith or government, cannot live in unity with such Body, and consequently cannot live in its divine Spirit either." (A.A.S. 35 (1943), 202; in Civ. Catt. 1943, III, 79.)

These are, as one sees, declarations inspired completely by that severity which, in the first part of our study, we noted in the founding of the Church in the New Testa-



ment, stressing again how terrible is the break of heresy or schism.

Now comes the question: Do these declarations apply as a whole to all separated brothers, that is, those who are separated from the Catholic Church, whether as a result of an individual and voluntary separation from her, or as a result of heresy and schism into which they were born and which they have inherited from their ancestors?

He who knows the language of the Church, of the holy fathers and of Canon Law, knows very well that the Church, in using the terms "heretic" and "schismatic" means those who are formally and knowingly, therefore, with full consciousness of what they do and full freedom of decision that they are such or that they may be supposed to be such (cf. CIC, Canon 1325, paragraph 2; cf. texts of the holy fathers cited in S. Tromp, S.J., *Corpus Christi quod est Ecclesia*, III: De spiritu Christi anima, Rome, 1960, pp. 185-190).

Now who would dare to affirm at once that all separated brothers find themselves in these conditions? Certainly it better corresponds to justice and Christian charity, and moreover, to the reality of facts, to admit, as we have seen earlier, their good faith, leaving in particular cases, the judgment to God alone, without wishing therefore to specify and give statistics.

But even leaving this question aside, though so important to good faith, it must be made clear that the encyclical "Mystici Corporis" denied that heretics and schismatics belong to the Mystical Body, which is the Church, only in the full sense which is applied to Catholics. That is to say, it denied the full participation in the life which Christ communicates to His Church and to the divine Spirit of Christ which animates and gives life to the Church.

Separated brothers are certainly deprived of the enjoyment of such privileges and graces proper to the members visibly united to the Catholic Church (cf. Encyclical, *Mystici Corporis*, A.A.S. 35, (1943), 243; in *Civiltà Cattolica*, loc. cit., 168). However, the encyclical does not exclude in any way all forms of membership in the Church and every influence of the grace of Christ. This is an important conclusion dictated by the text itself, which we shall make clear.

Gathering together, therefore, all the elements of the teachings outlined up to now, we can describe the position of separated

brothers in the only true Church of Christ as follows:

(a) It is of fundamental importance to consider the conclusion which has just been drawn from "Mystici Corporis." One must note, therefore, that heresy and schism, even where they are formal, do not destroy completely that belonging to the Church which is created by holy Baptism as taught by the encyclical "Mediator Dei" and by St. Paul.

Non-Catholic Christians are not to be placed in any way, therefore, on the same plane as the non-baptized. Not only do they still carry on their foreheads the name of Christ but also his very image profoundly and irremovably imprinted in their souls through holy Baptism.

(b) They are, to state in a more positive way, subjects and members of the Church by virtue of Baptism itself. Even this effect of Baptism is not taken away by heresy and by schism. This state of belonging is the minimum required by the language used by the Church with respect to them. Otherwise how could it call them "brothers," invite them to "return" to it—they who have never belonged visibly to the Church?

How could it say for them it is not a strange house, but their own, showing that it considers them an object of its maternal love? How could the Holy Father call them his "sons?" Moreover, this membership in the Church is confirmed by the jurisdiction exercised by the Church in different cases regarding them.

#### EFFECT OF BAPTISM

One must also note in this respect the Holy Father's manner of speech in the recent discourse for the opening of the preparatory meetings of the council. He said that "it is an important point to be held firmly by every baptized person" that the Church remains forever His one Mystical Body of which He is the head, to which each of us believers is related, to which we belong" (*L'Osservatore Romano*, Nov. 14-15, 1960). Why should this point be held firmly by every baptized person and also, therefore, by separated brothers, if they did not belong to it in any way?

(c) On their part the separated brothers, according to the teaching of the encyclical "Mystici Corporis," are ordained to the Mystical Body of the Saviour "by a certain unconscious desire and longing" ("Mystici Corporis," A.A.S., loc. cit., 243).



(d) As a consequence of their fundamental, though not full, belonging to the Church, they also enjoy the influence of the grace of Christ. How could one understand, in fact, and reconcile with the merciful goodness of Christ and His love for souls, that He could completely abandon these souls, who also carry His image carved in them, or that He would not treat them differently from those not yet marked with that special relation to Him?

This is still less understandable, if one considers that for the greater part it is the case of souls in good faith, as it has been said before. And considering the facts, how can one otherwise explain all that which we have noted of good in separated brothers and which we have already explained?

Moreover, the Instruction of the Holy Office, already quoted, states explicitly that the ever-increasing nostalgia for unity, observed among separated brothers, is the work of the Holy Spirit (cf. Instruction De motione oecumenica, cit., loc. cit., 142). The Holy Spirit operates, therefore, in a special way and abundantly, even in them, though as we have said, not in so full a way as in the members visibly united with the Catholic Church.

### 3. Catholic Ecumenism

Very important conclusions are drawn from what we have outlined.

(a) The Church can never fail to take interest in the separated brothers. They are, as we have said, its members, though not in the full sense; they are its sons, and, therefore, necessarily the object of its maternal care. It has, therefore, the strict duty to do everything to lead them back within its bosom, that they may have the fullness of life and enjoy fully all the rights and privileges of sons.

And the Church has always been conscious of this duty. This is shown by the councils for union celebrated in Lyons (1274) and in Florence (1439-1442). And likewise by the efforts of the Council of Trent, manifested in the decrees of reform and in the negotiations with separated brothers, and after the council in so many works of controversy, for example, of St. Peter Cansius, St. Robert Bellarmine and others.

In this respect Pius XII also noted, in the encyclical "Mystici Corporis," that they "with the inspiration and help of divine grace, are attracted toward partaking in the unity and in the charity" of the Church. He addressed to them "with a spirit overflowing with love" the invitation "to assist spontaneously the interior impulses of divine grace" ("Mystici Corporis," A.A.S., loc. cit., 243).

(e) As a consequence of their position, the separated brothers are the object of ardent and tender affection on the part of Holy Mother Church. This was seen a short while ago when Pius XII spoke of his "spirit overflowing with love" for them, and very fully in the statement of Pope John XXIII, quoted earlier in this study.

It is certainly a love full of profound pain and sorrow, it is the love of a heart bleeding because of the separation which prevents brothers from enjoying so many privileges and rights and makes them lose so much grace. But probably precisely because of this, it is a more profound and ardent love, referred to by God in the Scripture: "Can a woman forget her infant so as not to have pity on the son of her womb? And if she should forget, yet will not I forget thee" (Isaias 29, 15).

The method and rhythm of the unionistic activity of the Church were obviously different in different ages, depending on the state of the Church itself and on the religious situation in general. Today, this activity is particularly timely and urgent. Today the Church of Christ finds itself before a secularized, technological and materialistic world. Today in the so-called former mission countries, a situation has developed in a few years which is decisive for the future of Christianity in those regions. Today, more than ever, the Church of Christ must be strong, and it will be all the more so if it is united.

(b) This also applies in due proportions to all the sons of the Church, whether members of the hierarchy or laymen. It is the urgent duty of all of them to work for the unity of Christians.

(c) The unity of the Church, willed by its Divine Founder, is like sanctity, like



catholicity, an essential trait of it. But in its positive reality, unity is not yet complete, not perfect, but needs our work to make it ever more full, to overcome victoriously all obstacles and difficulties.

This is not just any kind of unity, but, according to the will of its Divine Founder, it is a unity in doctrine, in government and in the means of salvation (Sacraments), and is founded on the Rock chosen by Christ Himself, St. Peter and his successors.

(d) The preceding points have shown the precise meaning of the unionistic or ecumenical movement of the Catholic Church. It can be described briefly as three proposals.

The first is the affirmation of the essential unity existing already in the Catholic Church. It is the unity which Jesus Christ wanted and realized in Peter and his successors, the Roman Pontiffs; unity of doctrine, of sacraments and of government.

The second proposal is the affirmation that there is also a unity still to be achieved, that is to say, the unity of the members sorrowfully separated from the Apostolic See.

The third is that this union of separated members must not be achieved with force, but with the free acceptance of union with the Catholic Church, it being "absolutely necessary that it be carried out with a free and spontaneous will, since only those people who wish to believe can believe" (*Mystici Corporis*," A.A.S. loc. cit., 243).

It must be prepared, therefore, by patient work, full of understanding and char-

ity, according to the possibilities of every son of the Church. In the final analysis, it will be the work of the Holy Spirit, which alone can give to the separated brothers the light and strength to overcome all difficulties opposing their final step.

(e) Prayer, therefore, will be the means of collaboration for all the faithful. Pius XII had a striking phrase for this necessity in the encyclical "*Mystici Corporis*":

"The fact that many people still err far from the Catholic truth and do not bend the mind to the inspiration of Divine Grace happens because neither they nor the Christian faithful raise their most fervent prayers to God for this purpose. We therefore strongly and insistently exhort all those people who feel love for the Church, that, following the example of the Divine Redeemer, they may not cease to raise similar prayers" (*Mystici Corporis*," A.A.S., loc. cit., 243).

Let us unite, therefore, in that prayer which priests of the Church have repeated every day in the Holy Mass: "Let us offer (these gifts) for the holy Catholic Church, that Thou may deign . . . to unite her . . . throughout the whole world." "Lord regard not my sins, but the faith of Thy Church; deign to give her peace and unite her according to thy will."

The image used from the very first ages of the Church, that is to say, that the Lord should gather together all its dispersed members, like the grain which forms the eucharistic bread is gathered, acquires in this perspective all its very deep significance.

## Conclusion

The life of the Church in the last 50 years has been characterized in a special way by three great movements: the eucharistic-liturgical movement, that of Catholic Action and that of the missions.

Together with them, the movement in favor of the separated brothers has developed ever more strongly, today assuming grandiose proportions. In a certain sense one can speak almost of a general mobilization of all the categories of the Catholic Church in favor of these brothers.

At the outset, we say, in fact, that the Holy Father gave, though only indirectly, a distinctly unionistic goal to the council

and he invited the whole Church to collaborate in a collective effort of sanctification for its preparation. The council cannot be, however, a destination but a forward step. It will be a question of establishing ever more frequent contacts with separated brothers, inspired by maximum sincerity and charity.

Only in this way will we be able to achieve, with slow hard work, a gradual drawing closer of mentalities, the elimination of prejudices, the thorough knowledge of faith and charity and ever closer collaboration in fields not connected directly with faith.



The Pope himself, speaking of union with brothers of the east, described this patient work as "a step closer, then a step still closer, and finally the perfect reunion" (Exhortation in a letter to the clergy of Venice, April 21, 1959, A.A.S. 51 (1959) 380). It is evident therefore that it is not a question at the present time of spectacular results nor of short term successes, but of a long, patient and persevering preparation, to which can be applied the proverb quoted by the Lord Himself: "One sows, another reaps" (John 4, 37).

This preparatory work obviously requires of those people performing it a solid prepa-

ration in knowledge of their own faith, of clarity of ideas, of sound adherence to their own faith and above all of sanctity consisting of humility, charity, prayer and sacrifice and exemplary Catholic life.

If one adds to this preparatory work the grace of the Holy Spirit which the Lord implored on the night before His death and which He implores again in every Holy Mass through the mouth of the priest, we can hope with confidence that the day is drawing constantly nearer when there will be "one fold and one Shepherd" (John 10, 16) for all those people who carry on their forehead the name of Jesus. ■ ■ ■

*That all may be one, even as thou,  
Father, in me and I in thee; that they  
also may be one in us, that the world  
may believe that thou hast sent me.*

*John 17:21*

## READING I'VE LIKED

Is Christian morality merely a dogged obedience to a strict code of law for which heaven is the distant reward? Or is it a loving response to Christ who invites us to be "other Christs?" *The Law of Christ* by Bernard Haring, C.S.S.R., (Vol. 1, Newman Press. \$8.50) is a text based on the second of these views. Marks a new phase in the teaching of Moral theology.

Your inquirers will enjoy, while being solidly instructed, Bishop Sheen's latest book: *Go to Heaven*. (McGraw-Hill. \$4.50.)

A fascinating and vital matter is the Church's teaching on sickness and death. *Death and the Christian* by Jean-Charles Didier (Hawthorn. \$3.50) treats every phase of the topic showing its place in God's plan for our ultimate happiness. Will answer the unvoiced difficulties of many catechumens.

If you wish to make fullest use of *A Catholic Catechism* you will appreciate four small books that explain the plan, contents and possibilities of that great catechetical text. *An Introduction to: A Catholic Catechism* by Hubert Fisher and the three volumes of *Teaching the Catholic Catechism* by Josef Goldbrunner. Herder and Herder.

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## GUIDE

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# Guide Lights

## THE THIRD NATIONAL CONFERENCE . . .

The Third National Conference on Convert Work was held at St. Joseph's Seminary, Dunwoodie, New York, the last week in June. It was sponsored by the Paulist Institute for Religious Research and the New York Confraternity of Christian Doctrine. These groups were ably assisted by the Confraternity in other areas, particularly by Rockville Centre and Newark, and by the Convert Apostolate of Brooklyn. The theme of the Conference was *Mobilizing the Parish for Convert Work*. Over 200 priests were present.

Monsignor Charles M. Walsh, the Director of the New York Confraternity, was the Master of Ceremonies for the opening luncheon. He introduced Monsignor Francis F. Reh, the Rector of the Seminary, Most Rev. John J. Maguire, the Vicar General of the Archdiocese of New York, and Very Rev. William A. Michell, the Superior-General of the Paulist Fathers.

Monsignor Reh welcomed the priests to the seminary. Bishop Maguire, speaking on behalf of Cardinal Spellman, told them that the work of convert making is Christ's work, but that Christ has made Himself dependent upon not only priests, brothers, and sisters, but upon lay people also. Father Michell suggested that we should substitute for "convert Making" the idea of "sharing the faith." He said we are spiritual millionaires and we should think in terms of expending our wealth on the less fortunate outside the unity of the Church.

Monsignor Walsh, who together with Father Edward Soares and Father John J. Keating, C.S.P., headed the Sponsoring Committee, read a communication from the Apostolic Delegate to Cardinal Spellman. The Apostolic Delegate related the contents of a letter he had received from His Eminence Pietro Cardinal Ciriaci, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of the Council. His Eminence, noting the theme of the Conference, remarked what marvelous results could be had, if, especially in rural areas, entire parishes could be mobilized for the work of conversions. He extended his congratulations to the organizers of the Conference and expressed best wishes for its success.

Father Keating gave the keynote address in the afternoon. He was introduced by

Father George Hagmaier, C.S.P., the chairman of the session. Father Keating stated that "we have an obligation to those not of our Faith and we cannot effectively meet it without enlisting the aid of the laity." Father Joseph M. Connolly of St. Gregory the Great Parish, Baltimore, Maryland, shared the platform with Father Keating and delivered a stimulating address on certain aspects of lay mobilization with illustrations from his own parish which has incorporated many progressive ideas, particularly in liturgical action.

In the general discussion which followed group discussions, Father Connolly and Right Rev. Monsignor Thomas F. Neary of St. Joseph's Church, Auburn, Mass., were panel members, and Father Keating acted as chairman. Unfortunately, Monsignor Neary had an attack of laryngitis, and though he bravely took his place, he expressed himself content to let Father Connolly do the talking. We regretted his silence, since he has spent many years in active convert work with great success.

In the evening, Father Soares introduced Father Myles M. Bourke, Professor of Sacred Scripture at St. Joseph's. Father Bourke spoke on *The New Scripture and the Old Apologetics*. He stated that the title was not his. The content, however, was his, and it provoked lively discussion. He had those who supported him and those who felt some misgivings about the trends in modern biblical studies.

## THE SECOND DAY

The second day attempted to make provision for both those who had experience in convert work and for those who had little or none. The morning and evening sessions were divided into two panels. The work of recruiting was the subject of the morning. Panel One dealt with the ordinary methods of recruiting.

Father Edward J. McLean of St. Joseph's Cathedral, Hartford, Conn., was the chairman, and Father John McGinn, C.S.P., the Editor of *Guide*, and Monsignor Louis F. Miltenberger, Pastor of St. Gabriel's Church, Washington, D. C., addressed the group. Father McGinn talked on the use of the written word, and Monsignor Miltenberger on the spoken word as tools of recruitment. These two men between them represent over



a half century of experience, and out of that experience they culled and expressed simple and proven methods of attracting non-Catholics which any priest could readily put into operation.

In Panel Two, Father William A. Cogan, President of Adult Catechetical Teaching Aids, Chicago, was the chairman. Three specific recruiting methods were reviewed. Father William J. McPeak, All Saints Church, New York City, discussed the Open House, which he has used with considerable success. Father Paul Collis, Sacred Heart Church, Bloomfield, New Jersey, explained his plan for Operation Telephone, which has been the chief means of recruiting in his convert work. And that eminent figure on the convert scene, Father John A. O'Brien of Notre Dame, outlined the advantages of door to door visits.

In the evening, Panel One discussed the ABC's of instructing and Panel Two dealt with a re-evaluation of methods. Father Joseph F. Lawlor, the Director of the Confraternity in Rockville Centre, New York, was the chairman of Panel One. Father Joseph M. Champlin of Immaculate Conception Cathedral, Syracuse, New York, spoke on what to look for and what to do on the opening night of the class. Father William M. Gallagher, the Director of the Catholic Information Center, Newport, Rhode Island, described how he used priests, brothers, sisters, and laity in conducting classes. And Monsignor Walsh, gave a very practical review of the more widely used catechisms and text books in the field.

Father John J. O'Connor, the head of the Convert Apostolate, Brooklyn, New York, was chairman of Panel Two. Father Anthony Wilhelm, C.S.P., discussed a new catechism which he and Father Robert Quinn, C.S.P. are preparing. Father Edwin J. Duffy of Corpus Christi Church, New York City, related how he uses the laity to instruct in the houses of those who would not or could not come to a class. He has a group of almost one hundred lay catechists. Father William Winchester of Akron, Ohio, demonstrated a new visual method of presenting the Baltimore Catechism.

At lunch on the second day, Monsignor Charles J. McManus, Director of St. Patrick's Information Center in New York, spoke on the St. Paul Guild. This organization started many years ago to assist ministers who became financially embarrassed by their decision to enter the Catholic Church. Monsignor McManus said that the Guild presently has a substantial fund on hand and invited priests to call on it if they came across any minister made indigent by reason of conversion.

In the afternoon there was a general session for all on the problem of follow-up. It was felt that even those who have been in the work for some time do not have much of a jump on the less experienced in this area. Father Keating was chairman for the session. The first speaker was a layman, Frederick B. Chappell. As a convert he was able to give some insights into the need for follow-up. Father Kevin Kelly of St. Charles Borromeo Church, New York City, outlined some general methods which might be employed. Father James Kerins, C.S.S.R., Director of the Information Center in Washington, D. C., then spoke specifically on the Convert Guild which operates in that city. The Guild is a national organization founded by Monsignor Nienaber who was present at the Conference and joined in the discussion of follow-up. Finally there was a demonstration of a visual program used to stimulate discussion among new Catholics. Father Francis Duffy from St. Patrick's Information Center in New York, explained and evaluated it. In the late afternoon, Father Ivan J. Arceneaux of Jeanerette, La., spoke on the formation of the laity.

#### THE FINAL DAY

On the final day, the morning session dealt with the image of the Church. Father McLean was the chairman and the two speakers were Albert Simon, a layman, and Father Walter Dalton, C.S.P., Pastor of St. Paul the Apostle, a church in a Dallas suburb. Mr. Simon is a convert from Judaism. He gave a picture of how the Jew considers the Church and its teaching and spoke on the difficulty that one encounters when he decides to become a Catholic. Father Dalton outlined the ambitious program of public service he has undertaken in his parish and told how it has given the Church a new esteem in his area.

At luncheon, Father John Byrne of Holy Cross Church in New York City entertained and enlightened everyone with a talk filled with humor and wisdom on his experiences in convert work. The program was rounded off with a demonstration of some of the audio and visual aids which are on the market. Father Roger A. Reynolds, Executive Secretary of the Confraternity in Newark, N. J., was the chairman. He introduced men who had personal knowledge of various aids and each gave a demonstration and evaluation. Those who participated were Monsignors Charles J. McManus, John J. Walde, James T. Ryan, and Fathers William J. Cogan, James B. Lloyd, C.S.P., William J. Quinlan, and Edward Soares.

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